

Terracotta votive figures of a camel and an elephant found in Gujarat.



**Lata Desai** unveils a major exhibition and series of accompanying events that tell the story of successful migration

## Celebrating Gujarati culture

Next spring and summer, leading community organisation Subrang Arts in collaboration with Brent Museum and Archives, hosts *Roots and Changes – Gujarati Influences*, a multi-dimensional exhibition and events series as part of Brent’s London Borough of Culture celebrations.

Gujaratis are part of a long history of migration from a region that has been shaped by early economic relations in trade, colonialism, and educational and professional exchange. The underlying aim of this project is to tell the Gujarati story of a successful migration, which has enriched the UK, through patterns of work and leisure. Work includes traditional crafts, trade, architecture, commerce, employment, entrepreneurship, and pleasure comprises cultural expressions such as music, dance, food, family and spiritual life.

Funded by Heritage Lottery fund, this

project will combin oral history interviews, a large exhibition with an audio-visual display and a season of events lasting six months which will involve workshops, talks, crafts, music, dance and film screening events. The project will link with collections and activities at British Museum, thereby helping to deepen both collection and community knowledge. The two museums will spearhead cross-cultural exchange and engagement with culture and heritage of the Gujarati community. Community activist Lata Desai and the ethnomusicologist and museum curator Rolf Killius are the researchers and curators of this project.

*Roots and Changes: Gujarati influences is at Brent Museum and Archives from 13 March until 1 August 2021.*

## Objects on loan

Emma Dunmore lists some of the British Museum loans on view across the UK

### Bath

*The Wonders of the times: Thomas Lawrence*  
Holburne Museum  
9 January–3 May  
When he arrived in Bath in 1780, the young artist Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830) was considered to be a boy genius like his Renaissance predecessors Raphael, Michelangelo and Dürer. This exhibition of work from Lawrence’s early years tells the story of an exceptional portraitist growing up at the end of the century when Britain created its own unique artistic voice. It includes some of Lawrence’s most brilliant masterpieces as well as rarely seen works in pencil, pastel and oil.

### Glasgow

*Old Ways and New Roads: Travels in Scotland c.1720-1830*  
The Hunterian  
29 January–9 May  
This major exhibition addresses the impact of Scotland’s new transport infrastructure on the development of travel,



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William Pars, *Ruins of the Temple of Apollo Didymus*, 1765 (see *Sir John Soane's Museum*).

tourism and topographical descriptions of the nation between 1720 and 1830. It features paintings, prints, drawings, maps, manuscript tours and other associated objects from The Hunterian and several works on paper from the British Museum.

**London**

*In Search of Ionia*  
 Sir John Soane's Museum  
 24 February–31 May 2021  
 This show features 21

original drawings from the British Museum's collection made by watercolour artist William Pars on the first of three expeditions funded by the Society of Dilettanti to Western Turkey and mainland Greece in the 1760s. The works are accompanied by several works in the John Soane collection, creating a dialogue between Soane and Pars. Guest curated by British Museum curator Ian Jenkins

**London**

*Epic Iran*  
 Victoria and Albert Museum  
 13 February–30 August

This is the first exhibition since 1931 to bring together the finest examples of Iranian art and design. Covering 5000 years, from 3000 BC to 2000 AD, it will explore Iran's great heritage as well as the country's impact on contemporary art.

**Sutton Hoo**

*Swords of the Kingdoms: The Staffordshire Hoard at Sutton Hoo*  
 The National Trust,  
 Sutton Hoo  
 8 March–30 September

British Museum objects will come together with loans from Birmingham Museums Trust (Staffordshire Hoard) and Norwich Castle Museum (East Anglian material) so that items from the Staffordshire hoard can be compared with magnificent objects from the same period. The exhibition will address the question of whether some of the warrior regalia in the Staffordshire Hoard may have actually come from the kingdom of East Anglia.



Late Sassanian gilded silver vase decorated with scenes of a grape harvest, 5th–7th century AD (see *Victoria and Albert Museum*).

**Beauty and heroism**

The British Museum showed the BP exhibition *Troy: myth and reality* from November 2019 to March 2020. This Spotlight Loan provides an opportunity for venues to display objects and themes which featured in this major temporary exhibition. The characters of Helen and Achilles are central to the narrative of the Trojan War. The young Greek queen Helen is the most beautiful woman in the world, whose abduction causes the war. Achilles is the greatest Greek hero, whose short but glorious life is the focus of Homer's *Iliad*. The works of art chosen represent key moments in the story of the Trojan War that define the lives and character of these two figures, as interpreted by ancient and modern artists.

Helen's abduction by the Trojan prince Paris is shown on an Etruscan cinerary urn. A drawing by Dante Gabriel Rossetti shows her in Troy, surrounded by the Trojan characters whose lives are disrupted or cut short as a consequence of her actions. An etching by Pietro Testa depicts the infancy of the hero Achilles, while a blackfigured Athenian amphora shows his brutal side as a warrior, taking revenge on the Trojan prince Hector. Both ancient objects featured in the *Troy* exhibition at the British Museum.

The objects in this show provide reference points for telling the story of the Trojan War. They also raise questions regarding the universal themes of responsibility, beauty, heroism and love.

A British Museum Spotlight Loan *Troy: beauty and heroism* supported by the Dorset Foundation is at The Ure Museum of Greek Archaeology, University of Reading from 19 February until 16 May 2021, Haslemere Museum from 20 May until 21 August 2021 and The McManus Art Gallery & Museum, Dundee from 26 August until 21 November 2021.



Amphora showing Achilles dragging Hector's body behind his chariot. The reverse shows the Judgement of Paris, c. 520–500 BC.